

TAXON SUMMARY

Red-crowned Parakeet (Macquarie Island)

1	Family	Psittacidae
2	Scientific Name	<i>Cyanoramphus novaezelandiae erythrotis</i> (Wagler, 1832)
3	Common Name	Red-crowned Parakeet (Macquarie Island)
4	Conservation status	Extinct

5 Reasons for listing

The last record of this subspecies was in 1890.

6 Intraspecific taxa

C. n. subflavescens (Lord Howe I.) is also Extinct. Other subspecies are found on the North and South Islands of New Zealand, Kermadec I. and Chatham I.; all are to some extent threatened.

7 Past range and abundance

This subspecies of Red-crowned Parakeet was endemic to Macquarie I., where it was common until 1879. Over the next decade, numbers fell quickly and it was not seen after 1890 (Taylor, 1979).

8 Ecology

The Macquarie Island subspecies of Red-crowned Parakeet lived in tussock grassland.

9 Reasons for extinction

Wekas *Gallirallus australis*, introduced to Macquarie I. in 1872, may have preyed on eggs and young of Red-crowned Parakeets, but the subspecies' decline was

rapid after 1878, when rabbits were successfully established. It is thought the rabbits reduced the area of suitable habitat by grazing tussocks and enabled an increase in the population of cats (Taylor, 1979), with which the parakeets had coexisted successfully for at least 70 years. Rabbits are scarce in winter (Jones, 1977) and it is thought the cats may then have turned to Red-crowned Parakeets (Hamilton, 1894).

10 Bibliography

Hamilton, A. 1894. Notes on a visit to Macquarie Island. *Trans. Proc. N. Z. Inst.* 27:559-579.

Jones, E. 1977. Ecology of the Feral Cat *Felis catus* (L.), (Carnivora: Felidae) on Macquarie Island. *Aust. Wildl. Res.* 4:249-262.

Taylor, R. H. 1979. How the Macquarie Island Parakeet became extinct. *N. Z. J. Ecol.* 2:42-45.

Comments received from

Nigel Brothers, Peter Brown.